

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EUR-12 AF-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5552

INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTOWN

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 393

S E C R E T BRIDGETOWN 1623

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, XA, XL, CU, UR, BB, GJ

SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO SOVIET/CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA

REF: STATE 148740

1. BARBADOS. THE BARBADOS CABINET THUS FAR HAS NOT TAKEN A POSITION ON THE SOVIET/CUBAN PRESENCE IN AFRICA. THIS REFLECTS THE VIRTUAL ABSENCE OF NON-DIPLOMATIC GOB INVOLVEMENT IN EXTRA-REGIONAL AFFAIRS, BUT IS ALSO INDICATIVE OF THE GOB DESIRE TO AVOID BEING DRAWN INTO WHAT IT PERCEIVES AS "GREAT POWER RIVALRY." IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, HOWEVER, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER HENRY FORDE OUTLINED SOME OF THE BASIC GOB IDEAS ABOUT RECENT AFRICAN EVENTS INVOLVING THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS. FORDE SAYS BARBADOS HAS NO GENERAL QUARREL WITH CUBA OVER THE LATTER'S AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT ANYMORE THAN THE GOB WITH FRENCH INVOLVEMENT. HE NOTES THE GENERAL GOB DESIRE TO SEE THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS IN AFRICA BY PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED, PREFERABLY THROUGH THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY. FORDE SAYS THAT CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA WAS JUSTIFIED CONSIDERING THE
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COLONIAL NATURE OF THE CONFLICT THERE AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR ONE OF THE FACTIONS. CUBAN ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA WHILE THE LATTER WAS UNDER ATTACK FROM SOMALIA, SAYS FORDE, CAN ALSO BE JUSTIFIED, ALTHOUGH HE ADDS THAT THE ATTEMPTED VIOLENT SOLUTION OF BORDER AND ETHNICITY QUESTIONS ON THE HORN HAD IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BELIZE/GUATEMAL AND GUYANA/VENE-

ZUELA DISPUTES. FORDE SEPARATES CUBAN ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA AGAINST THE ERITREAN SEPARATIST AS NOT SO READILY JUSTIFIABLE CONSIDERING THE SELF-DETERMINATION QUESTIONS INVOLVED. THE GOB POSITION MAY HAVE BEEN MADE THE CLEAREST IN A JUNE 2 LETTER FROM FORDE TO AMBASSADOR ORTIZ CONCERNING THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF THE RHODESIAN QUESTIONS. THE LETTER CALLS FOR SUCH A SETTLEMENT ACHIEVED THROUGH THE PARTICIPATION AND AGREEMENT OF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED AND INDICATES THE GOB WILL NOT SUPPORT ANY SOLUTION UNLIKELY TO SECURE PEACE. IMPLICIT IN THESE AND OTHER STATEMENTS IS GOB VIEW THAT AFRICANS SHOULD BE ALLOWED PEACEFULLY TO WORK OUT THEIR PROBLEMS WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. AT THE SAME TIME, WE EXPECT THE GOB WOULD RESIST ANY ATTEMPT TO ENLIST IT IN ANY US-SPONSORED INITIATIVES AGAINST THE SOVIET/CUBAN AFRIKA CORPS. WE LIKEWISE DOUBT THE GOB CONSIDERS CUBAN AFRICAN INTERVENTIONISM AS DIVISIVE WITHIN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

2. GOVERNMENT OF GRENADA HAS NOT COMMENTED TO US ON CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA. THE GRENADA MEDIA AND GENERAL POPULATION SIMILARLY REFRAIN FROM EXPRESSING ANY SIGNIFICANT COGNIZANCE OF OR INTEREST IN AFRICA CUBA OR THE USSR. PRIME MINISTER GAIRY DOES ENJOY "RED-BAITING" HIS MARXIST OPPOSITION, HOWEVER, AND PROBABLY WOULD JOIN IN CONDEMNING CUBAN ADVENTURISM. UNFORTUNATELY, GAIRY'S SUPPORT WOULD NOT BE ALL THAT
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HELPFUL TO US IN THE CARIBBEAN WHERE HE IS CONTROVERSIAL.
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